2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
EZ6 Malta EZ6

An Introductory Note on Maltese

197 Maltese is a distinct language, which is morphologically related to North African Arabic but draws much of its vocabulary, syntax and idiom from Sicilian.[1] This difficult language is spoken by all classes, but it did not become an official language of the law courts until 1934, when it replaced Italian. As it has only been a written language for little more than 100 years, it does not yet have a rich literature.

104 In order to help the reader with the Maltese names and words that appear in the text, the following is given as a short guide to their approximate pronunciation.[2] In general, vowels have much the same sound as they do in Italian. The following consonants are pronounced as indicated: *ċ*: chair; *ġ*: gentle; *g*: gift; *h*: silent; *ħ*: aspirate; *għ*: the *ghajn*, is usually silent; *j*: year; *q*: glottal stop; *x*: shine; *ż*: zebra; and *z*: boots.

[1] Joseph Aquilina, *Papers in Maltese Linguistics* (Valletta, Royal University of Malta, 1961), p. 180.

[2] For the pronunciation of Maltese consult: Joseph Aquilina, *The Structure of Maltese* (Valletta, Royal University of Malta, 1959), pp. 1–17.

2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
EZ6 Malta EZ6

I did the fieldwork on which this study is based at this period in Malta's constitutional history. A new constitution was promulgated late in 1961, and elections took place in February 1962. In place of dyarchy, it provided for 'concurrent powers' on foreign affairs and defence to be held by the Malta Government and a United Kingdom Commissioner.

The first Maltese political parties were born out of the controversy over language which followed the publication in 1880 of the Keenan report on education. This recommended that English should be taught in place of Italian in the primary schools, although students might later take Italian as an elective subject. In the Lyceum and the University, except for the Faculty of Theology, all work was to be done in English. These recommendations, which the government tried for many years to implement, weakened the dominant position which Italian had enjoyed in the educational system. As Italian was the language of the law courts, the clergy and the University, it was something of a class symbol. Most of the educated classes, and especially the lawyers and priests, strenuously resisted the move to downgrade it in favour of English. Many of the refugees from the Italian wars, who came to Malta after 1850, gave encouragement to the partisans of Italian. The Italian movement also whipped up considerable support amongst the clergy and their parishioners by declaring that English would certainly bring with it increased Protestant influences.

The dispute thus created interest groups which were to dominate Maltese politics for the next fifty years. On one side was the pro-English, or *riformista*, party led first by Sigismondo Savona, later the Director of Education, and subsequently by Count (later Lord) Gerald Strickland. This party, which generally supported government policy, favoured close cultural and political ties with Britain. By the 1920's, it became known as the Constitutional Party. Its successor, the Progressive Constitutional Party, is led by Strickland's daughter, Miss Mabel Strickland.

The *anti-riformista* or pro-Italian party was led by Dr. Fortunato Mizzi and later by his son, Dr. Enrico Mizzi. The Nationalist Party eventually emerged out of this group, and today, although the language issue is quite dead, it is still one of the two major political parties. Both parties campaigned for support in the villages and thus, for the first time, forcefully presented national political issues to the masses.

2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
EZ6 Malta EZ6

000 political issues to the masses. The pro-Italian group came to
● 197 dominate the elected members, and blocked the affairs of govern-
648 ment to such an extent that Britain re-established the official
668 majority.

[665] Britain did not succeed until many years later in implementing the recommendations of the Keenan Report. The language of instruction in the primary schools remained English or Italian, at the option of a student's parents – the so-called '*pari-passu*' system. In 1921, Britain attempted to remove language from the political arena by stipulating in the new constitution 'that nothing shall be done by way of legislation or administration which shall diminish or detract from the position of English as an official language or to reduce its use in education or in the public service.'[1]

197 For the first six years after the 1921 Constitution was promul-
665 gated, the government was in the hands of the political groups
668 which eventually merged into the Nationalist Party: Monsignor Panzavecchia's 'Unione Maltese' and the 'Partito Democratico Nazionalista' led by Enrico Mizzi. The newly-formed Labour Party at first supported the Nationalists, but later became a firm ally of Strickland's Constitutional Party. Monsignor Michael Gonzi, now Archbishop of Malta, was a representative of the Labour Party until he became Bishop of Gozo in 1924. During this early period, the only serious political skirmish occurred, not surprisingly, over the 1923 Pari-Passu Bill by which the Nationalists introduced both English and Italian as compulsory subjects in the elementary schools. Strickland attacked the bill on the ground that it made no provision to teach Maltese, the language of the masses. He maintained that without a firm knowledge of their own language, children could never learn two foreign
[648] languages at the same time. Although the British at first declared that this act was contrary to the spirit of the constitution, it was allowed to become law.

665 The Constitutional Party, supported by the Labour Party, won
666 the 1927 general elections, and Strickland became Prime Minister. The elections, however, were marred by an incident which embittered the relations between Strickland's supporters and their opponents. On the day before the election, the Nationalists circulated thousands of copies of a perjured affidavit which declared that Strickland was a Freemason. Although the perjurer, a

[1] Section 57.

2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
EZ6 Malta EZ6

659 A Papal Delegate visited Malta and concluded that the differences between the government and the Church could best be settled by means of a concordat. During most of the year following the Papal Delegate's visit, Britain tried unsuccessfully to negotiate a concordat and to get the Holy See to forbid the Maltese clergy to take part in the general elections scheduled for May 1930. The Vatican, however, declared that Strickland was not *persona grata* and that as long as he remained in power, a concordat was not possible.

In Malta, the relations between the Strickland Government and the Church went from bad to worse. In April 1930, two Constitutional Party Ministers gathered many sworn statements that Monsignor Gonzi, the Bishop of Gozo, had instructed priests to preach against the Constitutional Party and to refuse absolution to its supporters. This inquiry greatly angered the Church. On the 666 first of May, the Archbishop and the Bishop of Gozo issued a joint 659 pastoral which forbade people to vote for Strickland or those can- 648 didates who supported him. In view of the spiritual sanctions that [64] threatened people who voted for the candidates of one of the two [642] major parties, Britain had no option but to cancel the elections. It subsequently suspended the constitution, but kept the Strickland ministers on as advisers.

• 197 A Royal Commission went to Malta to investigate the trouble. 64 Following its report, Britain restored the constitution and abolished the teaching of Italian in primary schools. In June 1932 665 the Nationalists defeated Strickland and his supporters in a bit- 666 terly contested election in which 96 per cent of the electorate voted. However, their period in office was very brief. The Governor dismissed them in November 1933 for deliberately evading the constitutional provisions regarding language, for they had set about to re-establish the primacy of Italian in the educational system and the civil service. Once again the administration of the islands became the responsibility of the Governor.

186 During the fourteen years of Governor's rule which followed, 64 the deep wounds caused by the long, harsh political conflict slowly healed. The first Italian bombs of the war finally killed the language dispute. The united defence effort and the common suffering caused by the prolonged bombardment further helped to reunite political rivals and suppress parochial quarrels. Britain awarded the people of Malta and Gozo the George Cross for

2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
EZ6 Malta EZ6

owns no land or other property in common and its inhabitants are rarely called upon or choose to work for a common end. At the same time, villagers are conscious of belonging to a distinct social entity which is distinguished from other villages by a collective nickname and a common sub-culture.

Many villages have a dialect quite distinct from that of their neighbours, which the inhabitants, even those who have learned to speak 'correctly' (*bil-pulit*), normally use to each other; although they will invariably address strangers in their school Maltese. There are also a number of minor variations of certain customs between villages or districts. These may include the way church bells are rung to announce a death or the way some aspects of the festas are organized. Finally, each village has its own very private body of gossip, stories, scandals and jokes, which makes up a part of its history and tradition that is not shared with outsiders.

As a congregation and a religious corporation, the village *qua* parish owns land and other property, including the parish church. It also has an appointed leader in the parish priest. The inhabitants of the village meet regularly for worship, to take part in religious processions and to carry out other devotional activities. Furthermore, they act together to celebrate the annual festa of the patron saint, who symbolizes the unity of the secular and religious aspects of the village, for he is patron of both village and parish.

A village can also be regarded as a moral community. That is, people who live there must conform to a certain code of conduct. While the community cannot enforce this code with the type of formal sanctions the police and the Church use to punish infractions of secular and religious laws, public opinion can, and does, exert great pressure for conformity. A person who flouts the canons of convention becomes the object of malicious gossip and, depending on the nature of the offence, he may also become the target of overt hostile action and have his house front splashed with paint, or his front door burned. The only way to escape from the sanctions of public opinion is to move to one of the urban areas or the expanding new suburbs, where licence can be relatively anonymous.

Members of a village thus share a common body of custom and tradition; they also display an intense loyalty to their place of birth. This sense of loyalty is strongest during the annual festa of

565 The landed classes in Malta and particularly the nobility have never taken any considerable part in the communal life of the villages in which they maintain their country seats and draw rents from the lands which they own. They have always been more urban than rural and more European than Maltese. A [793] squirearchy on the English pattern has been lacking, and the functions which, in the English village, fell to the squire have, in Malta, come within the wide range of activities of the Parish Priest.

621 Apart from the clergy[10] and the gentry, the greater part 795 of the population of the traditional village in Malta was made 565 up of the peasantry deriving their livelihood directly or indirectly from the land or in some cases the sea. Within this section of the community homogeneity was the keynote. There was one Church. All the populace were Church members and attended the same services at the same times each day of every [203] week. The Church could therefore be the centre of diffusion of news to the villagers - both relating to farming and to general affairs in and out of the village.

621 Within the village the peasant and his family, patriarchal, 565 patrilineal and patrilocal, worked the few tmien of land held 241 on rent or lease: rarely was much of it owned by the cultivator. 423 The work of the farm and of the household went on as a single [611] unit (Section 2). The two were often located within the same [591] cluster of buildings (Case VI, v. Plan). Clearly some farmers were richer than others, some had more land, some more animals, but accepted stratification within the village went no further than this: there was no middle class between priest and farmer.

628 For the peasant, the bounds of his regular experience 197 were the limits of the village. Contact between villages, even where close together, was slight and invariably less than that between the individual village and Valletta. Evidence of this is found in the dialect differences between villages but equally illuminating is the fact that the basic dialect distinction that can be made is that between the Urban area, with its Italianized vocabulary and intonation, and the rural parts of the Islands with their characteristically broader vowels, harsher gutturals and fewer European words and idioms (B/Aquilina, J). Language is but one aspect of rural culture in the Maltese Islands which reveals the essential independence of the village within the traditional rural 628 scene. Village patriotism is expressed in inter-Parish 186 rivalry and in a variety of regional reputations, proverbs, [794] and local lore. Thus the shrewdness of the inhabitants of Rabat is revealed by the saying that "A man from Rabat is worth two Jews"[12]. The men of Żebbuġ (Malta) are acknowledged to be merchants par excellence however, while those of Qormi

113 The War of 1939-45 gave rise to a crop of literature in
195 Italy, Britain and other countries with solitary Malta as the object of both propaganda and admiration.

191 As to language, it is clear the War finally killed the
● 197 greater part of the pro-Italian feeling in Malta and confirmed English as the first foreign tongue of the people. It
177 had been a language of government for more than a century
178 but had not replaced Italian in education or at law until the inter-War period. Italian had grown to first place under the Order and had maintained its position during British nineteenth century rule except in Government and commerce.

Maltese itself, meanwhile, had not escaped from its traditional role as 'kitchen-tongue' and, in fact, did not replace Italian as one of the two official languages of Malta until as late as 1934. Thereby Maltese achieved, for the first time, respectability in Malta. There has since been a considerable increase in the number of books and periodicals appearing in the language, along with general education and spread of literacy among a monoglot Maltese public. Over the same period the use of Italian has declined relatively (even in its traditional strongholds, the Church and the professional classes) and the demand for English has accelerated. In fact, for a small section of the urban population of Malta, English is now the mother-tongue and Maltese the second language. An illustration of
[204] the changed linguistic picture is afforded by the following classification of daily newspapers in Malta by language for 1888 ("Il Compagno per Tutti", 1888), 1920 (B/94 - 1920, p.333), 1933-34 (B/94 - 1933-34, p.409), and 1959 (B/97 - 1959, p.99).

	1888	1920	1933-34	1959
English.....	1	1	2	2
Italian.....	3	2	2	-
English and Italian...	-	-	1	-
Maltese.....	-	-	2	2

197 Since Maltese has approached respectability as a literary
214 language in its own country for only a quarter-century Maltese
[212] themselves have usually written in either Italian, as formerly, or in English, as is the case today. But, apart from this, it is clear that a Maltese language publication cannot expect to find a market outside the Islands nor among the significant section of the population, generally the professional and business classes, speaking English and Italian as well as Maltese but proud of their ability to read and write only one or both of the foreign languages and not their mother-tongue.

Maltese language publications today therefore tend solely to deal with Maltese matters and a public within Malta which lacks fluency in written English. Maltese language dictionaries and works of a philological or etymological nature are obvious exceptions to this - especially since the linguistics

197 214 of Maltese, with its semitic sub-strata and immense Italian and other European accretions, have attracted much attention among students of comparative linguistics abroad.

The circulation of the Maltese daily "Il-Borqa" (B/55) reflects the position in the Islands, being limited to the working and rural classes. Many periodicals of a religious or occupational nature, or those produced by some towns and villages, now appear in Maltese; others are bi-lingual. [191] [198] But a knowledge of English is now so widespread among the younger generation that one would expect it to consolidate its growing importance as the language of government, education and culture, with the use of written Maltese declining relatively - though growing in absolute terms with the extension of literacy.

190 538 113 [217] Maltese language fiction and poetry exists today along with a great deal of religious writing. The present bibliography makes no attempt to cover this field although several of the Maltese writers concerned do appear in the general list (Part 8), while the principal store-houses of Maltese literature, the Royal Malta Library (B/16) and the Royal University (B/17), and others, are mentioned in Part 1. Neither is any systematic coverage attempted of the wealth of material concerning the Knights Hospitallers and their sojourn in Malta though some of the principal sources are included in Parts 2 and 8.

113 Maps, plans and charts of the Islands are not included. Many of the collections listed in Part 1 contain such items (B/1, 5, 6, 16, etc.), the Naval and Military authorities in the Islands have made surveys, maps and charts as required, while many private individuals have added to the list. Reference to the official 2" to one mile map (Geographical Section, General Staff, No.3859, War Office, 3rd Edition - 1953) is recommended at all points in the present volume. Sheet 1 covers Gozo and Comino and Sheet 2 Malta. For Malta, more detailed coverage is provided by the 6" (O.S.G.S., No.3852) and the 25" to the mile (O.S.G.S., No.3752) maps. A valuable land-use survey in Malta (1955) and Gozo (1957) have provided the Islands' first detailed coverage of this nature (B/5, 336, 337). Also valuable is the indexed and comprehensive 'Malta Street Guide' (B/489).

The bibliography which follows attempts only a very basic classification into eight sections

Part 1... List of some collections of material on the Maltese Islands (B/1 - 17),

Part 2... List of some bibliographies on Maltese subjects (B/18 - 52),

Part 3... Sample list of some newspapers, periodicals and journals (B/53 - 85),

Part 4... Some almanacs, directories and year books (B/86 - 98),

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

the "tempestuous wind called Euroclydon" that still whistles across it during the winter months under its modern name of *gregale*, the "Greek wind," drove S. Paul on to its shores and brought it about that the "chief man" of the island, Publius, became its first Bishop. It was a centre of civilization, as well as a centre of the religious life of the Western Mediterranean, very much earlier, for Malta, in the words of the lamented Sir Themistocles Zammit, "was the holy island of neolithic faith, the half-way house of the early mariners, who trusted themselves to their frail wooden craft, full of hope in a protecting power."

Later, when we emerge from prehistory, we find the position reversed: Malta, instead of extending supernatural protection to peoples beyond its shores, comes under the political protection of others. During the many centuries of its recorded history Malta has had many rulers: the Phœnicians and their offspring, the Carthaginians, then Romans, Arabs, Normans, Angevins, Aragonese and Castilians, then for two and a half centuries the international Order of S. John of Jerusalem, and, finally, at the invitation of the Maltese people after a brief French occupation, the British. But despite the impact of such cosmopolitan influences this people has clung tenaciously to its ancient tongue, which is unquestionably of Semitic structure and has claims to descent from the speech of Dido and Hannibal.[1] It was, in fact, from a bilingual inscription in Phœnician and Greek found in Malta in 1697, of which more will be said in the following chapter, that the Phœnician alphabet was reconstructed. Of this inscription Dr A. V. Laferla writes in his *Story of Man in Malta*: "The construction and grammar . . . are identical with those of modern Maltese and many of the words (*lil*, *bin*, *tnejn*, *jisma*, *iberikom*) are still in use at the present day." S. Luke in the Acts describes the Maltese as "barbarians"—that is, as neither Greeks nor Romans—and

[1] The name Hannibal is still met with in Malta as a Christian name. Its Maltese diminutive is Nibblu.

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

we may safely assume that S. Paul's Aramaic was as comprehensible to them as was their related Phœnician to him.

There seems to be no evidence that this Semitic speech of the Maltese "barbarians" had been replaced by some other language when the Arabs seized the Maltese islands in 870. Many of the philologists therefore hold that on to this Punic stock the Arabs grafted, during the two hundred and twenty years of their occupation, a vocabulary of contemporary Arabic which did not completely oust words of the older, kindred stratum. These scholars consider that the dialect received, in fact, a second, fresher infusion from the same reservoir and that the resulting blend is the core of the Maltese language of to-day.

Inevitably, in the course of ages, this language has borrowed words from the languages and dialects of the other countries with which Malta has been connected—from Sicilian, from Aragonese, from Italian, from French, even from English—but it has always fitted such words into its own Semitic framework, has governed them according to the rules of its own Semitic grammar and mechanics. Thus the Maltese who have emigrated to Syria and to the north coast of Africa have no difficulty in making themselves understood by their Arabic-speaking neighbours, who for their part can make themselves readily understood in Malta. Here is the Lord's Prayer in Maltese, which I quote so that the reader unfamiliar with the language may see for himself what it looks like:

Missierna li inti fis-smewwiet,
Jitqaddes isimek,
Tigi saltnatek,
Ikun li trid Int, kif fis-sema hekda fi-art.

Hobzna ta' kull jum aghtina l-lum,
Ahfrilna dnubietna, bhalma nahfru lil min hu hati ghalina.
U la ddahhalniex fit-tigrib,
Izda ehlisna mid-deni. Hekk ikun.

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

197 ● 539

And here is another example, a translation by the late Sir Augustus Bartolo, scholar, historian, orator, staunch Imperialist and one of His Majesty's Judges in Malta, of the first verse of Longfellow's *Psalm of Life*, beginning with the familiar words "Tell me not, in mournful numbers":

Tghidulix li id-dinja hi holma,
Mhiex hlief frugha, u niket, u hemm;
Dak li jidher fil-wiċċ hu qarrieqi,
Ujekk torqod ir-ruh taghna tintemm.

The formal allocutions of the present Archbishop of Malta to his flock are headed as follows:

"MICHAEL GONZI
Ghall Grazzja t'Alla
U Tas-Sedi Apostolika
ARCISQOF TA' MALTA
SAHHA U BARKA"

(Michael Gonzi, by the Grace of God and the Apostolic See Archbishop of Malta, Greeting and Blessing.)

197 648

It doesn't really look much like a dialect of Italian, does it? Yet that is the impression which Mussolini's unscrupulous and efficient propaganda bureau determined to create in Italy. It set itself to convince the Italians that the Maltese were a branch of the Italian race and that their speech was an Italian dialect—a somewhat corrupt one, perhaps—which had absorbed during the Arab occupation of their islands a certain quantity of Arabic words. Fascist propaganda would draw a false and misleading analogy between Maltese and such Italian dialects as Sicilian, which, while Italian in grammar and structure, has incorporated Arabic words with its Italian vocabulary.

In point of fact Maltese is the converse of Sicilian, since it is an Oriental language that has absorbed non-Oriental words into its Semitic structure. But Mussolini and his agents, zealously directed by his son-in-law Ciano, succeeded in making large numbers of Italians believe quite honestly—

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

seeing that they had no means of checking the facts for themselves—what they wanted them to swallow. Even in the eighteenth century, as we shall see in Chapter XIII, an Italian visitor to Malta described the language of the Maltese as "their own perfidious idiom."

A case in point is the episode, recounted to the writer by one of His Majesty's Ambassadors to the Quirinal during the Fascist régime, concerning a Maltese football team on a visit to Italy. On their arrival in Rome the Maltese were met by the Italian team detailed to look after them, who had been well briefed to treat their visitors as 'unredeemed' blood-brothers. The Italians, knowing no reason to doubt the accuracy of their brief, greeted the Maltese footballers at the station in all good faith with a cordial address in eloquent Italian, of which their guests understood barely a word. Realizing, however, that they in their turn would be expected to say something, they replied with an equally friendly speech in Maltese, whereupon their hosts threw up their hands in mystified despair, crying, "*Ma che fratelli son' questi*—but what sort of brothers are these?"

A pleasant French contribution to Maltese is a word for a train, *xmundifer* (*chemin de fer*), thought to have been introduced by Maltese emigrants returning from Algeria and Tunis. And, as has been said above, English words, too, have found their way into Malta's eclectic vocabulary, words for the most part of a technical kind or related to sport. Among these is the verb "to score" which, as Professor J. Aquilina has pointed out, is conjugated as *niskorja*, I score, *skorja*, *skorjat*, *skorjajna*, *skorjaw*—he, she, we, they have scored a goal, and so on.

But it is interesting to note that we appear to be witnessing the beginnings of a two-way traffic in this connexion. The common Maltese form of greeting and farewell is *sahha*, literally "health," a word that springs easily and comfortably also to the lips of non-Maltese who have spent any time in the islands. Thanks, no doubt, to the habitual use of this

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

term by the numerous British Service men and women who have been stationed in or have passed through Malta, *sahha* has been admitted, in the form "saha," into the more recent editions of *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* as an English word for "good-bye," with due acknowledgment of its Maltese origin. And perhaps "saha" is but the forerunner of others; for in its issue of the 5th January 1945 the London *Spectator* had this to say on the etymology of the word "spitchered," which occurs in one of the war books on Malta:

> The word clearly derives from the Maltese *spiċċa*, meaning "finished" or something similar. Naval opinion agrees with Air Force opinion on that. But naval opinion claims credit for embodying the word in the English language. And as naval opinion can point to its use as long ago as 1903, the Air Force does seem to be grounded or, indeed, spitchered on this particular point.

4

In some parts of the Old World the visitor can select, according to his tastes, the century that he prefers. It is no exaggeration to say that in Malta he can choose the millennium and more than the millennium. If he is a palæontologist he may wander about the cave of Ghar Dalam and study *in situ* the remains of the elephants and hippopotami who left their bones there when the world was yet young, and of giant swans who sailed on lakes that have long since vanished. Advancing from these and from the Neanderthal Man, of whom traces may have been found in Malta, many thousands of years into the Stone Age, he will find in Malta and Gozo a series of megalithic and neolithic sanctuaries—Tarxien, the Hypogeum at Hal Saflieni, Ħaġiar Qim, Mnajdra, Ġgantija, to mention only the most important—unequalled in any other part of the world.

He will find other survivals of the Stone Age, of a different sort, in the cart-tracks which traverse many of the barren

9: Luke G-5 (ca. 1920-ca. 1960) 1960
EZ6 Malta EZ6

CHAPTER XVIII

Old Survivals in Modern Malta

MALTA OCCUPIES A PLACE OF ITS OWN IN THE OLD WORLD not only by reason of the length and unusual character of its annals, not only by reason of the tremendous range of its architectural monuments. It does so because it combines with these features the circumstance that it is the home of a separate race, the smallest of European peoples.

There are, it is true, four independent states in Europe of lesser size than Malta, but the inhabitants of these states do not form distinct racial stocks, nor have they their own languages. The Maltese are the smallest nation with the longest history, and their islands are a microcosm, self-contained. Not only has Malta its own tongue. It has its own University—the oldest in the British Commonwealth Overseas and granted the Royal patronage and the prefix "Royal" by King George VI in his coronation year—with seven faculties: Theology, Laws, Medicine and Surgery, Dental Surgery, Engineering and Architecture, Arts, Science. It has, as we have seen, its own Nobility with their Committee of Privileges. It is an ecclesiastical Province whose Archbishop exercises jurisdiction since 1944 over the bishopric of Gozo, previously immediately subject to the Holy See since its formation in 1864. And in the history of this microcosm has been mirrored the life of the great world around it.

Viewed as a part of the British Commonwealth, Malta is unique in two particulars. It is the only British possession whose Government owns an Opera House and in normal times maintains an annual opera season and conducts the pawnbroking of the nation in the manner of certain Continental states.